

Message Text

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TO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW PRIORITY

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SUBJECT: CONSULAR REVIEW - SOCIAL SECURITY

REF: MOSCOW 18012

1. WE UNDERSTAND THE INTENT OF RAISING THE SOCIAL SECURITY QUESTION IN THE CONSULAR REVIEW IS TO ENABLE AMCIT BENEFICIARIES RESIDENT IN SOVIET UNION TO RECEIVE SOCIAL SECURITY BENEFIT PAYMENTS TO WHICH THEY ARE OTHERWISE ENTITLED. AN IMPEDIMENT TO MAKING THESE MONTHLY PAYMENTS REMAINS, AS THE EMBASSY HAS NOTED, THE LACK OF AGREEMENT OR ARRANGEMENT WITH THE SOVIET AUTHORITIES TO PERMIT ON-SITE VERIFICATION OF ENTITLEMENT RECORDS AND OF BENEFICIARIES. IF A VERIFICATION AGREEMENT WERE REACHED, IT WOULD ALSO BE POSSIBLE TO INITIATE MONTHLY PAYMENTS TO CERTAIN ELIGIBLE THIRD COUNTRY CITIZENS RESIDENT IN THE USSR AND TO MAKE ONE-TIME PAYMENTS TO SOVIET RESIDENTS, INCLUDING SOVIET CITIZENS, FOR BENEFITS ACCRUED PRIOR TO JULY 1, 1968.

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2. IN ORDER FOR U.S. MONTHLY SOCIAL SECURITY BENEFIT PAYMENTS TO BE MADE TO SOVIET CITIZENS WHO MAY BE ELIGIBLE, THE SOVIET SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEM MUST BE OF GENERAL APPLICATION (WHICH IT IS), PAY CERTAIN PERIODIC BENEFITS (WHICH IT DOES), AND HAVE PROVISIONS AUTHORIZING THESE PAYMENTS TO QUALIFIED AMCITS NO MATTER WHERE THEY RESIDE (WHICH IT DOES NOT. THIS IS COVERED UNDER SECTION 202 (T) (2)(A) AND (B) OF SOCIAL SECURITY ACT. (DEPARTMENT POUCHING COPY TO EMBASSY). WE QUESTION WHETHER THE SOVIET GOVERNMENT WOULD BE ATTRACTED BY THIS RECIPROCAL TYPE ARRANGEMENT.

3. A BRIEF SUMMARY OF U.S. EFFORTS TO OBTAIN ON-SITE REVIEW PERMISSION FOLLOWS: IN RESPONSE TO A JUNE 22, 1968 SSA REQUEST, THE SOVIETS INDICATED THEY WERE PREPARED TO HAVE U.S. ON-SITE VERIFICATION. IN AUGUST AN SSA OFFICIAL WAS IN MOSCOW TO MAKE ARRANGEMENTS FOR ON-SITES, HOWEVER, SOVIET INVASION OF CZECHOSLOVAKIA FORCED US TO DROP FURTHER ACTION THIS MATTER. A JOINT STATE, SSA, USSR MEETING WAS HELD IN WASHINGTON ON SEPTEMBER 24, 1970 AND THE VERIFICATION REQUEST RENEWED, BUT NO SOVIET RESPONSE SUBSEQUENTLY RECEIVED. EMBASSY MOSCOW'S CONSULAR SECTION WROTE TO MFA PURSUING THE MATTER IN 1973. IN SEPTEMBER 1973 HEW SECRETARY CASPAR WEINBERGER MET WITH MME. KOMAROVA, MINISTER OF SOCIAL SECURITY OF THE RSFSR IN MOSCOW AND PROBLEM OF ON-SITE REVIEW WAS ONE OF TOPICS DISCUSSED. RESULT WAS A FOLLOW-UP LETTER OF OCTOBER 3 FROM WEINBERGER TO KOMAROVA EXPLAINING U.S. REQUIREMENTS AND INDICATING A REPLY WAS EXPECTED - NONE RECEIVED SO FAR. ON JUNE 5, 1974 WEINBERGER MET A SOVIET DELEGATION IN WASHINGTON (ON NON-SSA BUSINESS), BUT HE AGAIN INQUIRED RE STATUS OF OUR REQUEST.

4. AS THE ABOVE SUMMARY INDICATES THE BALL HAS BEEN, AND CONTINUES TO BE, WITH THE SOVIETS. WE HAVE NO NEW INITIATIVES TO PROPOSE ON THIS SUBJECT AT THIS TIME. FOR PURPOSES OF CONSULAR REVIEW EMBASSY SHOULD REFER TO MOST RECENT U.S. EFFORTS ON THIS SUBJECT AND SIMPLY INDICATE THAT WE ARE STILL AWAITING A SOVIET RESPONSE TO OUR PREVIOUS INQUIRIES. THE U.S. IS PREPARED TO MAKE THE PAY-LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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MENTS INDICATED IN PARA 1 TO THE QUALIFIED PERSONS IF THE SOVIETS COOPERATE SO THAT THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE SOCIAL SECURITY ACT AND ITS IMPLEMENTING REGULATIONS CAN BE MET. ROBINSON

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